

Commas

Commas can be a little tricky at first, but I assure you that after a little practice, you'll be able to use them easily. Commas help a reader to understand our ideas clearly. **If we do not use any commas in a sentence our ideas become jumbled difficult to understand and complex.** Also, **if we, use commas, too much, our ideas are, equally difficult to, understand.**

So, when we use commas to separate ideas, it is much easier for someone to read our work and understand what we want to express. In this short worksheet, you will be able to understand commas a little more.

Take a look at this short paragraph and note where the commas are placed.

“A special even will take place on June 1st, 2015. This event will celebrate people, who have contributed to society. These people have raised money for charity, helped children, and carried out voluntary work. The event, which will be held at the conference centre, will feature a number of special guests and an award ceremony. In order to be part of this very special occasion, please send your nominations by January 6th. We are expecting high demand for this event, so please make sure that you get your tickets early to avoid disappointment.”

There are a number of ways to use commas in your writing. You can use them:	Page
1. to separate ideas in a list of three or more.	2
2. to separate the city and province/state/prefecture.	2
3. to separate day, month and year.	2
4. before a conjunction (but, or, so, yet, nor, and)	3
5. to separate two clauses (Dependent, independent)	3
6. to separate the an introduction word (However, Yes, Sorry, Wait, Unfortunately)	4
7. to separate added information that is not important, but useful to the sentence.	4
8. to separate quotations within a sentence.	5
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1. When you have a list of items, commas can separate each one. These items could be in the form of nouns, adjectives, or verbs.

- a. You can use commas to separate nouns, adjectives and verbs.
- b. Today I have to clean my room, meet some friends, and study for a test.
- c. The film was fun, exciting and entertaining.

Note* You can use a comma or exclude a comma before 'and' when making lists.

In the examples below, decide where to put the commas. Some commas have been done for you.

- 1. I really like listening to music reading non-fiction books and watching films.
- 2. By the time I am 30, I will have saved a lot of money travelled to lots of countries and started my own company.
- 3. In my opinion, the best countries to visit as a backpacker are Thailand Vietnam and Malaysia, because they are easy to travel around.
- 4. There are a number of reasons why someone may choose to study abroad such as new opportunities language skills and friendship.
- 5. With the increasing popularity of the internet, there are a number of people who prefer to stay home chat online and avoid contact with people.

2. Commas can separate cities and place names. Usually the city or town is first, then the state/province is second.

- a. There are a number of great places that you can visit in Osaka, Japan.
- b. I'm pretty sure that she has moved to Subang Jaya, Selangor

In the examples below, decide where to put the commas. Some commas have been done for you.

- 1. She was born in New York New York
- 2. The one city that you have to visit is Sydney Australia.
- 3. The Typhoon is set to hit Jeju korea before moving on to Manila Philippines.
- 4. Helsinki Finland has some of the best schools and universities in the world..
- 5. Where were you born? _____

3. Use commas to separate days, months and years.

- a. I was born on April 20th, 1979.
- b. There is an important event which will take place on Monday, December 10th.

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1. Albert Einstein was born in Germany on March 14th 1879 and died in New Jersey America on April 18th 1955.
2. The next Oscar ceremony will take place in Los Angeles on Monday November 5th.
3. Friday March 15th will be the day that Warner Bros release the new Batman film.
4. My flight gets in on Monday July 15th at 6pm, so can you pick me up?
5. When is your birthday? _____

4. A comma is usually used before a conjunction (but, so, or, nor, yet, and)

- a. I am really interested in moving to a new country, **but** I am a little anxious.
- b. There are a number of poor kids who need help, **so** we should try to raise money.
- c. I am not really into sport, **nor** do I like talking about it.

1. I'm usually not that confident with writing so I think I'm gonna make an extra effort.
2. I have a really important interview tomorrow but I am a little nervous.
3. There are a number of benefits of exercise yet many people choose not to do it.
4. When you reach the airport, you can take a taxi to my place or take a train.
5. Make a new example: _____

5. Use a comma to separate a dependent and independent clause.

An independent clause contains a subject, verb and has a complete thought.

"Sarah worked for a charity."

A dependent clause contains a subject, verb, but is not a complete thought. A dependent clause often uses a special marker* word like when, even though, or while.

"When Sarah worked for a charity ... (What happened next?)"

The sentence above is sometimes called a fragmented, or incomplete sentence, so we need to complete it.

"When Sarah worked for a charity, she helped to raise a lot of money for children."

- a. **If** people gave more money to charity, more people could be helped.
- b. **When** I graduate from university, I hope I can find a good job.
- c. **While** there are a number of good universities in my country, I'm thinking of studying abroad.
- d. **Though** Facebook has a lot of good benefits, I believe that people spend too much time using it.
- e. **Since** the football match on Sunday has been cancelled, we are planning to move it to the following month.

Note* Some dependent markers are: **after**, **although**, **as**, **as if**, **because**, **before**, **even if**, **even though**, **if**, **in order to**, **since**, **though**, **unless**, **until**, **whatever**, **when**, **whenever**, **whether**, and **while**.

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1. Although internet usage is increasing in many countries there are still a number of places without adequate access.
2. Whether you want to go on a trip or not we have to think of something fun to do.
3. Unless you stop smoking and eating unhealthy food soon you will get sick.
4. Before you come to the office could you pick something up for me?
5. Because the class was canceled last week we are going to have a make up class on Saturday morning instead.

6. Use a comma to separate an introductory word.

- a. Hi, where are you from?
- b. Sorry, I forgot it was your birthday yesterday.
- c. First, we have to meet this Friday to finish this project.
- d. Next, we have to decide who does which task.
- e. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the final presentation.

Note* Other introductory words: Furthermore, moreover, therefore, for example, well, meanwhile, in fact, in short, in conclusion, in sum and still.

1. Hey where have you been?
2. Wait I need to tell you something.
3. In fact there is a great need for volunteers on community-based projects.
4. Moreover as the roads are constantly jammed, this is a further reason why we need a better public transportation system.
5. Therefore the government has to provide extra funds to aid refugees.

7. Use commas to add extra information to the sentence. This information is extra and not essential for the sentence.

- a. Steven is from London / a. Steven, who is 21, is from London.
- b. My favourite band is coming here. / My favourite band, Metallica, is coming here.
- c. Football is not so popular. / Football, however, is not so popular.
- d. Kuala Lumpur is growing rapidly. / Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, is growing rapidly.

1. When the examination finishes at 4pm put your pencils down.
2. One of the best football players in the world Messi has decided to retire.
3. Pollution for example could be one of the causes of global warming.
4. The event which is the first of its kind will take place at caerphilly castle.
5. Nabe a popular winter dish in Japan is made from vegetables and is very healthy.

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8. Use commas to separate quotations in a sentence.

- a. "The test won't be that difficult," the teacher said.
- b. "The movie was amazing," said Ahmed, "but it was a little long."
- c. "There are many people without water," she said, "so we need to do something."
- d. Mr. Chen said, " My daughter will be coming home in the new year."

Note* Remember to put the full stop inside the quotations.

- 1. Yuki said "let's go somewhere this weekend. I'm bored of the city."
- 2. "If we all work together" said Jun "we'll be able to finish this thing."
- 3. "The new Apple iPhone will be released next month" an apple representative said.
- 4. "There are over 45 million refugees in the world" a member of UNHCR said.
- 5. "A language dies out every week" said my teacher "so we have to help save them."

The Oxford Comma

The Oxford Comma, as it is sometimes called, usually appears in a list before the word 'and.' For example:

I am into sports, music and painting. (Without the Oxford Comma)

I am into sports, music, and painting. (With the Oxford Comma)

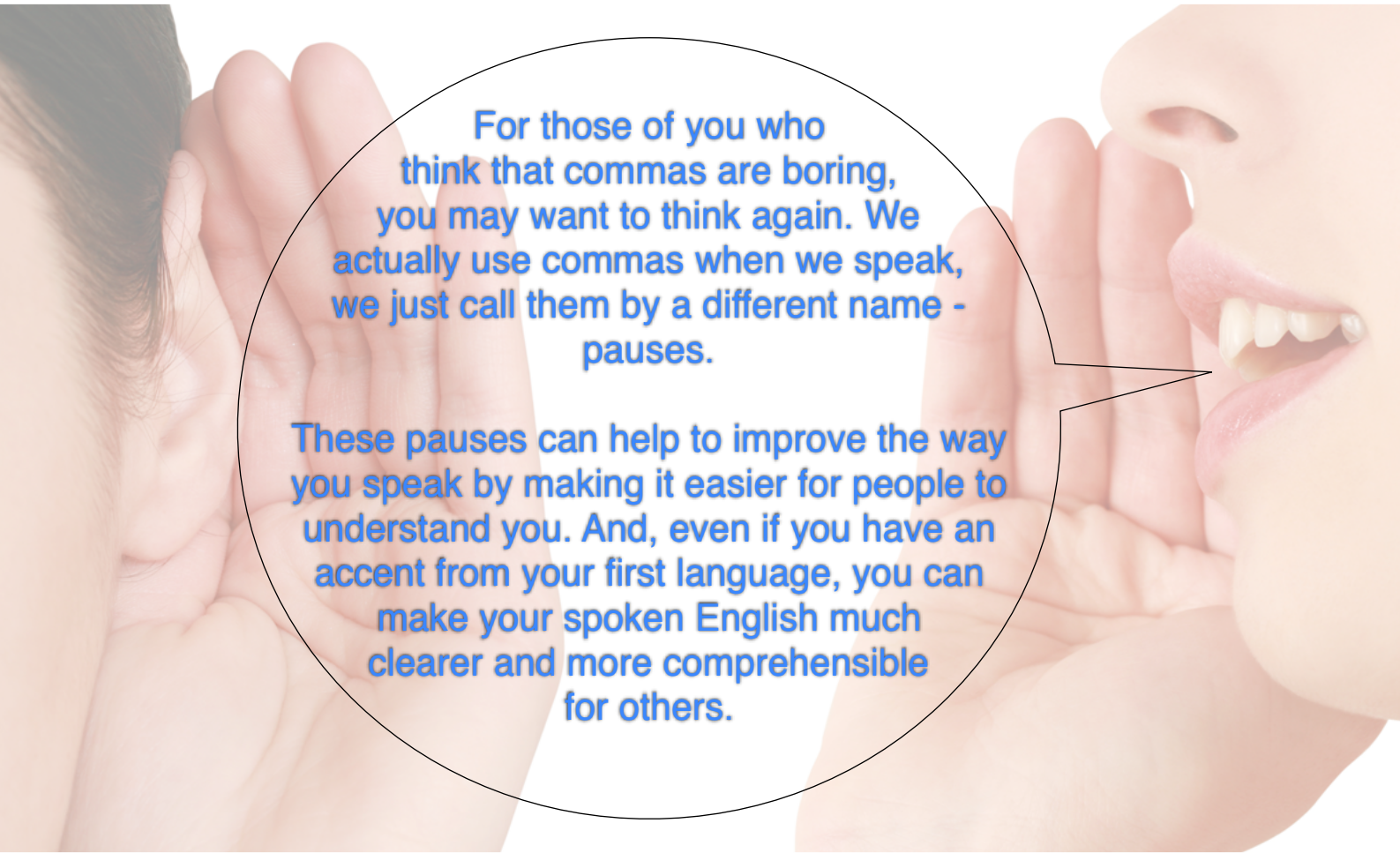
You can decide whether or not you want to use it.

The paragraph below has no commas. Try and put them into the right places.

"A special even will take place on June 1st 2015. This event will celebrate people who have contributed to society. These people have raised money for charity helped children and carried out voluntary work. The event which will be held at the conference centre will feature a number of special guests and an award ceremony. In order to be part of this very special occasion please send your nominations by January 6th. We are expecting high demand for this event so please make sure that you get your tickets early to avoid disappointment."

You can check your answers on page 1.

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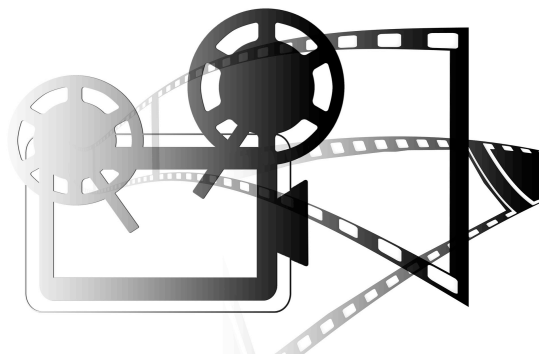
For those of you who think that commas are boring, you may want to think again. We actually use commas when we speak, we just call them by a different name - pauses.

These pauses can help to improve the way you speak by making it easier for people to understand you. And, even if you have an accent from your first language, you can make your spoken English much clearer and more comprehensible for others.

The only way to give you an example is to listen to it. Check out the link below, where you'll be able to watch a quick video on pausing, and how it can help your spoken English.

Link to
Youtube

[http://youtu.be/
IHX8iNOZWlc](http://youtu.be/IHX8iNOZWlc)



For further information on comma splices and run-on sentences, [Click here](#)

References:

www.Englishforeveryone.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/577/01/>